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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ZAGREB 000927

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KAWC](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [HR](#) [KAWC](#) [UNSC](#) [ICTY](#)
SUBJECT: CROATIA/ICTY: DPM GRANIC SHOOTS GOC IN FOOT AS
BOBETKO ISSUE REFUSES TO FADE

REF: ZAGREB 867

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED, PROTECT ACCORDINGLY. NOT FOR
INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

11. SUMMARY: DEPUTY PM GRANIC'S RASH CRITICISM THIS WEEK OF
THE ZAGREB DIPLOMATIC CORPS -- INCLUDING THE U.S.
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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00927 01 OF 02 280635Z
AMBASSADOR -- EMBARRASSED THE GOC AND OVERSHADOWED AN
OTHERWISE SOLID ATTEMPT TO SENSITIZE THE CROATIAN PUBLIC TO
IMPENDING NEW INDICTMENTS AFTER THE APRIL 16 VISIT OF ICTY
PROSECUTOR CARLA DEL PONTE TO ZAGREB (REFTEL). REACTING TO
PRESS REPORTS THAT ZAGREB DIPLOMATS AGREED WITH DEL PONTE
THAT GOC COOPERATION WITH ICTY WAS HALF-HEARTED, GRANIC,
INTER ALIA, CALLED ZAGREB-BASED DIPLOMATS "SUPERFICIALLY
INFORMED." GRANIC'S REMARKS DREW UNIFORMLY STINGING
CRITICISM FROM THE LOCAL MEDIA AS WE AND OTHER MISSIONS
REFUSED TO COMMENT AND LEFT THE GOC TO STEW IN ITS OWN
EMBARRASSMENT. PM RACAN, WHO COUNTS ON GRANIC TO SUPPORT
THE COALITION AND TO MANAGE THE GOC, EVENTUALLY SAID THAT
HIS DEPUTY'S VIEWS WERE "PERSONAL" AND DID NOT REFLECT THE
GOC'S POSITION. MEANWHILE, ICTY INDICTEE GENERAL JANKO
BOBETKO CHECKED HIMSELF OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, A POTENTIALLY
DISTURBING TWIST TO A CASE THAT ONLY TWO WEEKS AGO, THE GOC
AND THE OTP BOTH BELIEVED WAS CLOSED. END SUMMARY

FOOT IN MOUTH DISEASE

12. (U) IN AN APRIL 22 INTERVIEW TO THE NEWS DAILY "NOVI
LIST," DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GORAN GRANIC COMMENTED ON OTP
CHIEF PROSECUTOR CARLA DEL PONTE'S APRIL 16 VISIT TO
ZAGREB. GRANIC REMARKED THAT CROATIA WAS COOPERATING FULLY
WITH THE ICTY AND COMMITTED THE GOC TO DELIVER TO THE HAGUE
ANY NEW INDICTEES WITHOUT DELAY. (CROATIAN MEDIA SOURCES
SPECULATE THAT DEL PONTE IS SET TO DELIVER UP TO FIVE NEW
INDICTMENTS AGAINST FORMER CROATIAN OFFICIALS: ADMIRAL
DAVOR DOMAZET, GENERALS IVAN KORADE AND MLADEN MARKAC, AND
FORMER PRIME MINISTERS HRVOJE SARINIC AND FRANJO GREGURIC.)
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PAGE 03 ZAGREB 00927 01 OF 02 280635Z

13. (SBU) THE INTERVIEW WILL BE REMEMBERED FOR GRANIC'S
PETULANT REACTION TO THE INTERVIEWER'S REMARK THAT FOREIGN
DIPLOMATS AGREED WITH DEL PONTE'S ASSESSMENT THAT CROATIA
ONLY COOPERATED WITH THE ICTY RELUCTANTLY. GRANIC SAID
SOME DIPLOMATS "PROVED NOT TO BE UP TO THE MARK," WERE
SOMETIMES "RIDICULOUS IN THE WAY THEY MADE JUDGMENTS" AND
MADE STATEMENTS THAT WERE "DOWNRIGHT TRAGIC." ASKED TO
NAME THE DIPLOMATS, GRANIC LISTED: "MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH
EMBASSY, THE U.S. AMBASSADOR, THE FORMER SPANISH
AMBASSADOR, DUTCH OFFICIALS," AND "OTHER SUPERFICIALLY
INFORMED DIPLOMATS, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN CROATIA."

14. (SBU) GRANIC'S INTERVIEW IGNITED A MEDIA FIRESTORM,
EVEN AS WE, AND OTHER MISSIONS, BIT OUR TONGUES. A
COLUMNIST FOR NOVI LIST EXCORIATED HIM FOR USING A "TONE
THAT IS NOT TO BE USED EVEN WITH ONE'S OWN STAFF," ADDING
THAT GRANIC HIMSELF HELPED FOSTER THE IMPRESSION THAT
CROATIA COOPERATED UNWILLINGLY, ESPECIALLY IN THE CASE OF
GENERAL BOBETKO. ANOTHER COMMENTATOR FOR THE SAME PAPER
SAID GRANIC'S STATEMENTS COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED IN IRAQ
UNDER SADDAM OR IN AFGHANISTAN UNDER THE TALIBAN, BUT NOT
IN A MODERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY THAT CROATIA ASPIRES TO
BECOME. FOCUSING ON THE GOC'S EU ACCESSION DRIVE, ONE
COMMENTATOR SAID, "WITH ONLY ONE MOVE, GRANIC MANAGED TO
ANNUL THE ENTIRE POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE THAT WAS PICKING UP IN
THE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS." A FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMENTATOR
FOR THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED DAILY "VJESNIK" NOTED THAT
GRANIC'S WORDS RECALLED THE ATTITUDE OF THE HDZ GOVERNMENT,
WHICH VIEWED ZAGREB'S INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES AS
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PAGE 04 ZAGREB 00927 01 OF 02 280635Z
"ENEMIES OF CROATIAN STATEHOOD."

15. (SBU) GRANIC, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO HAVE AT LEAST SOME
SYMPATHIZERS IN THE GOC. UNNAMED FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES
TOLD "NOVI LIST" THAT GRANIC MIGHT HAVE BEEN UNDIPLOMATIC,

BUT THAT HE HAD "AT LEAST TOLD THE TRUTH." "AMBASSADORS MAY SPEAK LIKE THAT IN SOME BANTU STATE, BUT NOT IN CROATIA, WHICH IS A PART OF EUROPE."

WE'RE SORRY (WELL, SORT OF)

16. (SBU) AT A APRIL 24 PRESS CONFERENCE, PM RACAN SOUGHT TO LIMIT DAMAGE, SAYING THAT HE REGRETTED GRANIC'S REMARKS AND THAT THEY DID NOT REFLECT THE POLICY OF THE GOC. AT THE SAME TIME, HE SOUGHT TO INSULATE HIS DEPUTY -- AND RIGHT HAND MAN -- FROM FURTHER CRITICISM, SAYING THAT INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE RIGHT TO AIR THEIR PERSONAL VIEWS, WHICH MIGHT NOT BE, AND OFTEN WERE NOT, THOSE OF THE GOVERNMENT. THERE WAS NO NEED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUE, RACAN MAINTAINED.

BOBETKO CHECKS OUT: INITIAL GOC AND ICTY REACTIONS

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PAGE 01 ZAGREB 00927 02 OF 02 280635Z
ACTION IO-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	DS-00	EUR-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	LAB-01	VCE-00	NSAE-00	OIC-02	PA-00	SP-00	TEST-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-01	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00
	/004W						

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FM AMEMBASSY ZAGREB
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EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 ZAGREB 000927

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17. (U) AS THE GOC WAS DEALING WITH GRANIC'S GAFFE, ON APRIL 24 ICTY INDICTEE GENERAL JANKO BOBETKO CHECKED HIMSELF OUT OF THE HOSPITAL AND RETURNED HOME, REPORTEDLY AGAINST HIS DOCTORS' ORDERS. RACAN COMMENTED THAT THIS WAS A MATTER FOR THE GENERAL, HIS FAMILY AND HIS DOCTORS TO DECIDE, AND NOT A SUBJECT FOR POLITICIANS. "WE CANNOT DENY THE GENERAL

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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00927 02 OF 02 280635Z
THE RIGHT TO GO HOME," RACAN SAID.

18. (SBU) ICTY ZAGREB REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS OSORIO TOLD US APRIL 24 THAT THE IMMEDIATE CHALLENGE BEFORE THE GOC IS TO ENSURE THAT IT REPORTS THE DEVELOPMENTS IMMEDIATELY TO THE ICTY REGISTRAR. OSORIO COMMENTED THAT THE GOC WOULD HAVE TO KEEP THE REGISTRAR AND THE PRESIDING ICTY JUDGE WELL INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOBETKO CASE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE JUDGE MIGHT DECIDE THAT BOBETKO'S DECISION TO REFUSE HOSPITAL TREATMENT IS SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH A CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCE TO WARRANT REACTIVATING THE ARREST ORDER.

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